

REMARKS

This amendment is for the purpose of placing the claims in a better condition for allowance.

A previously submitted amendment canceled the rejected claims and placed the remaining claims, which had been indicated as being allowable, in independent form. Subsequent to the filing of the prior amendment a further review was made of the claims in the form presented in that amendment and the present amendment is being submitted since it places the claims in a better form for allowance. The changes made herein still retain the features which Examiner Manoharan considered allowable.

The following is noted with respect to each of the changes to the claims.

In Claim 6 “from the work-up stage” has been inserted to make clear the location from which the ionic liquid was recovered and then recirculated to the column. It is noted that this feature had been in a prior version of Claim 6. It is further noted that Claim 6 is a dependent claim and would be allowed by virtue of its dependency on its allowable parent claim.

In each of independent Claims 10-15 the words “liquid is” have been replaced by “are”. In that regard, the word “liquid” is not necessary since what is being referred to is the ionic salts. The word “is” is grammatically incorrect since it is a singular verb and the noun is a plural noun “salts”. Accordingly, “are” is more appropriate.

In Claim 10 “and wherein the side off-take is positioned in the region of the bottommost three plates” has been deleted. Although this term appeared in intermediate parent Claim 2, because Claim 10 then adds the specific location as being “directly at a bottommost plate in the column” the broad reference to the “region” in general is not necessary in view of the more specific location (“directly at”) of former dependent Claim 10.

In Claims 11-13 the term “ionic liquid” has been replaced by “bottom stream”. The reason for this change is that there is no antecedent basis in the prior part of each claim for “the ionic liquid” and it is “the bottom stream” which is being recirculated.

Claims 14 and 15 have been amended to add “wherein the bottom stream from the column is passed to a work-up stage”. This addition is made for the sake of clarity. Because it is an addition to each of the claims, the features which Examiner Manoharan had considered patentable in those claims still remain and the claims should again be allowed.

Claim 16 has been amended to refer to the material that is being recirculated as being “from the work-up stage”. This change is made for clarity purposes and is the same change made to Claim 6. As with Claim 6 it is also noted that Claim 16 is a dependent claim and should, in any event, be allowed because of its dependency on an allowable parent claim.

It is respectfully requested that this Supplemental Amendment should be entered and that the application should be allowed with the claims in the form amended by this Supplemental Amendment.

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Respectfully submitted,

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